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Europe Meets the Americas can increase our GDP by 15%



Elvis Tjin Asjoe.

The upcoming 'Europe Meets the Americas' has all the necessary elements to become a successful and productive event for all parties involved. This, according to Senior Policy Advisor to the Minister of General Affairs, Elvis Tjin Asjoe. The initiative of the government to convert Aruba into a commercial hub between Europe, South and Central America, has the potential for becoming an additional economic pillar and increase our GDP by approx-

imately 15%, according to Tjin Asjoe.

The realization of the first 'Europe Meets the Americas' comes after the government explored the interest and possibilities which was followed by creating a commission to be in charge of the execution of a plan. In this process they involved expert departments such as ARINA, Free zone, ATIA and the Chamber of Commerce, among others.

Four other very important players were involved, namely, PriceWaterhouseCoopers, Deloitte, KPMG and Ernst & Young who supplied delegations to participate in all the brainstorming sessions. These are involved in creating the structure for Aruba as a 'gateway' and are also promoting the event in earnest. The 'Europe Meets the Americas' is not intended to be a one-time event, but will continue to be repeated yearly so as to provide a basis of continuity for the commercial efforts.

Continued on page 5

Nicolas Maduro sworn in as Venezuelan president

CARACAS (AFP) -- Yesterday Nicolas Maduro was sworn in as president of Venezuela, taking the oath of office in the memory of the late Hugo Chavez to cheers in the National Assembly.

"I swear it before the eternal memory of the supreme commander," he said after being read the oath by National Assembly speaker Diosdado Cabello.

Cheers broke out in the packed assembly as the presidential sash was placed over the 50-year-old Maduro, who was elected president Sunday in snap elections to replace Chavez, who died of cancer on March 5 after 14 years in power.

Continued on page 6

Deadly hunt for bomb suspect turns Boston into ghost city



Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro(C) listens to the national anthem next to Maria Gabriel Chavez(L) daughter of late Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez and the President of the National Assembly Diosdado Cabello(R) during the Presidential inauguration ceremony. (AFP)



halted, while schools and universities, such as Harvard and Massachusetts Institute of Technology, were closed along with businesses. Barely a bar or restaurant was open in the ghostly city center streets.

State police chief Timothy Alben said "we are progressing through this neighborhood, going door-to-door, street-to-street," as police scoured the town of Watertown in search of the suspect.

Tsarnaev's family and friends appealed for him to surrender to police, who chased him armed with shotguns and automatic rifles, with the backing of helicopters and armored

personnel carriers.

The brothers are ethnic Chechen Muslims who moved to the United States about a decade ago. Their social media pages appeared to express sympathy with the struggle of Chechnya, which has been ravaged by two wars since 1994 between Russia and increasingly Islamist-leaning separatist rebels.

A citywide alert issued after two bombs tore through crowds at the Boston Marathon, killing three people and wounding about 180, reached a fever pitch in the hours after the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) released pictures of the two suspects on Thursday.

Boston Police Commissioner Ed Davis described the younger Tsarnaev -- who was an all-star wrestler in high school -- as "armed and dangerous."

The suspects' father Anzor Tsarnaev told Russia's Interfax news agency his sons had been "set up by the secret services because they are practicing Muslims."

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RBC Bank confirms sponsorship of 4th annual Art Rules Aruba program for youth



On Thursday morning, April 18 the Area Vice President of RBC Royal Bank (Aruba) NV, Pierre Rafini, signed an official contract of sponsorship with Ayra and Ira Kip, artists and journalists, and founders of the Pancake Gallery.

The two sisters, who lived on Aruba through ten years of their childhood, were inspired three years ago to initiate a summer program for island youth, offering creative classes in several artistic disciplines. They originally began by bringing in noted artists in the visual and performing arts, but over the years have steadily balanced out their team of instructors with accomplished creative artists of Aruba.

This year, they have increased the curriculum to include nine classes, with two new subjects, "Culinary Arts," taught by Chef Urvin Croes of White Modern Cuisine Restaurant, and "Creative Media" with Robert Tromp, whose IT agency designed their current website:

www.artrulesaruba.com.

The other classes schedule are Theater, Dance, Street Arts & Design, Photography, Film, Street Art, Fashion, Poetry & Spoken Word, with Music & Performance and DJ.

Urvin Croes will be joined by celebrity chef Heather Smith of Baltimore. The other instructors from Aruba are Joase Ann van der Biest teaching Fashion, Rosabelle Illis with Poetry and Vanessa Paulina repeating her Street Art program. Visiting instructors are Cebo Terry Carr from New York for Dance with Melly Mel of Canada. Samora Bergtop of Holland and Lamman Rucker of Los Angeles are teaching Theater and Eric Roco of Los Angeles for Music and Performance along with Sheyveca Krueger of Curacao/Rotterdam. The DJ class will be taught by DJ Motet of London and DJ Switch of Amsterdam, with the founders of I Love Muzica Aruba contributing their expertise to the program. Brendon Dalton of New York will be on island

for the Creative Media class. Christina Madry of New York co-instruct the Fashion program. Breis of London will also teach the Spoken Word class.

The program takes place over two weeks during the summer break, and as has been the practice in past years, a special presentation integrating all the disciplines will be performed for the parents and public at the end of the program, at a venue yet to be decided.

This year, the program has adopted the nickname "Art Rules Pariba" in honor of the classes taking place at the Abraham de Veer School in San Nicolas. The Kip sisters expressed how pleased they are to move their program to Aruba's east end, thanks to the enthusiastic collaboration of the school and Aruba's Minister of Justice and Education Arthur Dowers. The minister's hearty endorsement of the program prompted him to offer them the use of any of Aruba's facilities, and they found the administrators of the Abraham de Veer School exceptionally receptive. Busing will be provided to and from San Nicolas daily for all students, departing from the Cas di Cultura in Oranjestad.

The success of the program has prompted the organizers to expand the curriculum, and increase the number of students accepted to 250. Youngsters can perfuse the classes offered and apply to join in the summer program on their website.

Pierre Rafini expressed RBC Royal Bank's pride in sponsoring this program, which offers a unique opportunity for all island youth interested in the arts and culture.

Rosalie Klein

Renaissance Aruba Resort & Casino showed gratitude to their Local Corporate Clients during 'Asian Night'



Renaissance Aruba Resort & Casino was recently the host of its own Local Corporate Clients. Annually, an Appreciation Party is organized for all business clients and this year was no exception. Once again this year the sales team of the Renaissance Aruba Resort and the Renaissance Convention Center provided all business relations a night to remember where they came together to exchange ideas, 'mingle' and enjoy a great night. This year's Appreciation Party theme was 'Asian Night'- every guest got an eastern taste starting from the elegant decoration to the deliciously prepared buffet. The night was topped-off with great music provided by local band 'Delicious' who made sure everybody was on their feet and enjoying the party to the max.

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Fair and Open House at International School of Aruba

WAYACA -- The International School of Aruba is hosting a Fair and Open House today, Saturday April 20 in Wayaca. The day will feature a children's Book Fair, BINGO, BBQ, a Flea Market, chances to play soccer, beach tennis and volleyball, a basketball game between ISA and the Juilana Mayo school, a children's Book Club from 10-11, College Admission information, Autism Foundation information, school tours, Science, Math and Dutch teaching demonstrations, school bus tours around Wayaca, and more!

Admission is free. Hours are 10:00 to 3:00p.m.

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JCI Yala launches Diabetes awareness and prevention campaign

Members of the JCI-Young Active Leaders of Aruba, (Yala) welcomed media to Taste of Belgium in Palm Beach Plaza to announce the commencement of a special program aimed at educating islanders in understanding and controlling Type 2 Diabetes. This classification of diabetes is the most common form of the condition. Millions are diagnosed with type 2 diabetes, and many more are unaware they are at high



The JCI Yala Team

risk. Some groups have a higher risk for developing type 2 diabetes than others; among them: individuals of African, Latin and Asian extraction, as well as the aged. In the last decade, however, because of obesity from a young age, individuals are developing Type 2 Diabetes at increasingly younger ages.

With type 2 diabetes, either the body does not produce enough insulin or the cells ignore the insulin. Insulin is necessary for the body to be able to use glucose for energy. Normally the body breaks down all of the sugars and starches eaten into glucose, which is the basic fuel for the cells. Insulin takes the sugar from the blood into the cells. When glucose builds up in the blood instead of going into cells, it can lead to diabetes complications.

JCI-Yala has a team that will work with Family Doctor Gerrit Croes for one year, counseling diabetes patients on nutrition, while providing a workout program to help them get fit, and psychological counseling. The progress of the pilot program control group will be measured quarterly to evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

Sponsoring the campaign is MedioCosmetics NV, exclusive agents on Aruba for Glucerna HungerSmart Shakes and Meat Bars from Abbot Nutrition, which will be deployed as part of the

weight-loss program.

Island doctors and the Ministry of Public Health and Sports have repeatedly expressed their concern over the serious problem with obesity, and particularly child obesity, among Aruba's population, statistically one of the most overweight countries in the world. The correlation between these conditions and the early onset of Type 2 Diabetes has been irrevocably proven, and health officials feel it will create major issues for families and the health care system of Aruba without education and orientation regarding proper nutrition and prevention.

For more information on the JCI-Yala Type 2 Diabetes campaign, and other programs from this service organization, visit their Facebook page "JCE-Yala."

Rosalie Klein



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At the Divi Aruba Phoenix Beach Resort

Divi Dazzles CATA delegates with a magical evening under the stars



Delegate of the annual Conferencia Anual de Turismo de Aruba, the CATA tourism conference, hoteliers and members of the Aruba Tourism Authority enjoyed a most creative evening offered by Divi Resorts and hosted by it Managing Director Alex Nieuw- meyer and his executive staff at the Divi Aruba Phoenix Beach Resort.

Also on hand to meet and mingle with the dignitaries Tabitha Fecunda, Island Marketing & Promotion Manager, and Howard Maduro, Divi's Latin America Sales Director.

The evening took off with an elegant Western themed cocktail party under the stars with a full live orchestra and culminated with a hopping, rocking dance floor.

The invited CATA delegates, all travel professionals from Latin America, were enchanted with the reception they received. After all, they were invited to the island in order to experience Aruba's vacation product first-hand and were very impressed with the brand of hospitality at Divi Resorts, and the beauty of their resort surroundings.

Executive Chef Anthony de Palm further charmed guests with the rich and varies party food, served right on the beach, and as guests' toes were caressed by the sugar white sand their taste buds were tempted by contemporary Caribbean and international specialties.

Pictured here unforgettable party moments.





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Arubus: "WE will not tolerate any type of irregularity!"

ORANJESTAD -- On Wednesday morning the Judge in the case concerning the 15 Arubus chauffeurs, ruled that the Arubus company must continue to pay the salaries of these chauffeurs. The case is against a total of 19 chauffeurs being suspected of irregularities.

Arubus' response to the Judge's ruling is that they respect the Judge's sentence, however at the same time they must declare emphatically that they will not tolerate any type of irregularity and that they are analyzing what should be their next steps. At the moment they envision three possibilities: ask for the termination of these chauffeurs via the Department of Labor, appeal the case in higher court, or continue in what is called a "bodem procedure."

The main argument of the Judge was based on the part of the tourniquet, the mechanism on the bus which automatically counts passengers as they board. The Judge considered the argument of Arubus concerning the functioning of the tourniquet insufficient.

The argument of the lawyer representing the chauffeurs indicated that the tourniquet often times will spin more than once, either intentionally or not by some passengers.



Arubus recognizes this can occur, however not for 40, 50 or more times during the shift of the same bus. What's more, that this occurs so many times by certain chauffeurs and thereafter another chauffeur begins his shift with the same bus and this does not occur not even once.

More specifically, according to Arubus, in the case of the 15 chauffeurs involved in this case, the tourniquet count does not square with the money submitted by them, while that of the other chauffeurs were accurate. When they sent a letter to the chauffeurs to discontinue what they were doing, certain

chauffeurs stopped the practice while others simply continued.

According to Arubus Director, Teo Croes, the fact that these chauffeurs kept back money that is not theirs, was not addressed in the court sentence. Arubus can prove by means of, among others, reports that the tourniquet were functioning well contrary to the opinion of the chauffeurs.

Arubus' lawyer, Ronnie Wix indicated that he too, respects the Judge's sentence, but that this does not mean that they are in agreement with it. In this vein, Wix asserts that Arubus has a number of possibilities to pursue, such as was mentioned before. They are evaluating which of the three routes they will pursue. What is certain, according to the lawyer is that the Judge's sentence is not the end of the matter.

One issue that was presented (in court) is that these employees kept money that does not belong to them, which they never denied to this day. In other words, they used different arguments to try and mock the seriousness of what they did, according to Lawyer Wix. The lawyer also indicated that three chauffeurs admitted pocketing money, but the Judge simply ignored this important issue.

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12 dead, 60 missing in Texas factory blast

WEST (AFP) - Rescuers in Texas sifting through the rubble of homes destroyed when a fertilizer factory exploded earlier this week have recovered 12 bodies but 60 people remain missing, officials said yesterday.

Approximately 200 other people were injured in Wednesday's blast in this small town, Texas Department of Public Safety spokesman Jason Reyes said.

Investigators are treating

the blast site as a crime scene, although authorities say the blast was likely caused by a fire at the West Fertilizer Company.

Fifty homes were destroyed, while teams have searched 150 homes and have another 25 to go.

"We are still in a search and rescue mode," Reyes said.

Until now, officials had refused to release a firm death toll, saying only that it was between five and 15.

Europe Meets the Americas...

Continued from page 1

All the work and international promotion that has taken place since December of last year, are major efforts of the government and the private sector to promote the event and Aruba as a Gateway so that this can lead to becoming another economic pillar to reinforce the economy of Aruba.

It has to appear on the GDP of Aruba and create jobs, says Tjin Asjoe. In some of the countries visited thus far, they have created cooperative agreements in the area of energy, exportation of meat and coastal erosion.

The expertise of Holland and Europe together with TNO and other institutions showing interest in Aruba, will open major possibilities for our island.

Tjin Asjoe invited those interested to visit the web page: www.eumeetsamerica.com where they will see a number of companies already registered for the conference. He indicated that they are constantly receiving interest from different parts of the world. He concluded saying that, "there are many out there who want to do business with Aruba!"

Central Bank projects economic growth of 5.1% for 2013

ORANJESTAD -- The Central bank of Aruba in a recent bulletin indicated that they can foresee that Aruba will experience an economic growth of 5.1% for the year 2013. Businesses have a positive outlook of the future according to the Central Bank. In 2009 the short term index was 90.0 while by mid 2012, the index rose to 102.5.

While consumers are still very cautious with spending, businesses are reporting an improvement in their commercial results. The prospect is that 2013 will end up being a good year. This is because of the strong commercial investments, and thanks to tourism which registered an increase of 4.1% last year. As a result of this increase, the Airport received its one millionth passengers last December. In 2013 and for the following years, we can envision even more growth as a number of airlines have increased their air connections bringing more visitors to Aruba. Cruise Tourism is also looking forward to continued growth.

In their calculations of the economic growth for the year, Central Bank has taken into account the many major infrastructural projects. They are considering that soon construction will begin on the Green Corridor between Oranjestad and San Nicolas, construction of the new hospital, and the major project of moving the container wharf to Barcadera. They also considered the two windmill parks, construction of the Hard Rock Hotel and the finalization of the Ritz Carlton Hotel.

Central bank also awaits positive reactions from the reduction of water and electricity which took place at the end of 2012. The government, according to Central Bank, succeeded in restructuring the economy and at the same time for three consecutive years reduced the deficit of our national budget. They are of the opinion that another important element in the positive outlook is the National Dialogue between the government and employers and employees as part of the agenda of the government.

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Nuclear-armed states concerned' by N.Korea, Iran

GENEVA (AFP) - Representatives of the world's five big nuclear-armed states yesterday voiced concern over North Korea and Iran's nuclear programs, lamenting the threat to global efforts to avoid proliferation.

"In the context of the nuclear test conducted by (North Korea) on February 12, 2013, and the continued pursuit of certain nuclear activities by Iran ... the P5 reaffirmed their concerns about these serious challenges to the non-proliferation regime," they said in a statement.

The representatives of the United States, Russia, China, Britain and France -- the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and longtime nuclear weapons states -- made their statement at the end of a two-day preparatory meeting in Geneva ahead of the next review in 2015 of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

That treaty has since 1970 set the global agenda for keeping countries from getting the bomb.

In their final statement, the so-called P5 stressed "the fundamental importance of an effective IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) safeguards system in preventing nuclear proliferation" and vowed to continue to work to "find peaceful diplomatic solutions to the outstanding problems faced by the non-proliferation regime."

Since launching its third nuclear test, North Korea, which withdrew from the NPT in 2003, has been locked in increasingly hostile exchanges with Seoul and Washington, including threats of nuclear war and precision missile strikes.

Iran, which remains a signatory of the NPT, is meanwhile believed to be working towards developing nuclear weapons, although the country insists its work is being conducted for energy and medical purposes.

Russia presided over this week's high-level diplomatic meeting. France will take the reins of next year's meeting aimed at preparing the 2015 NPT review conference.



AFP photo shows floodwater engulfing a car lot yesterday in Des Plaines, Illinois. The suburban Chicago town is battling floodwater from the Des Plaines River which crested at a record 11 feet later in the day. Record-setting rains and rising rivers have caused wide-spread flooding in many Illinois communities. (AFP)

Maduro sworn in as Venezuelan president

Continued from page 1

Maduro, 50, said he wanted to begin his presidency "with a call to all Venezuelan men and women to continue to build a better fatherland of peace, an inclusive fatherland for everyone, by everyone."

Speaking of the opposition, he said, "I call on them to converse in the different settings where conversations can be held. I am ready to converse even with the devil."

But the new president also resumed attacks on the opposition, highlighting what has been a week of soaring political tensions since he was declared the winner of Sunday's snap elections by a narrow margin of 1.8 percentage points.

His speech was briefly disrupted when a man in a red shirt rushed onto the stage and roughly pushed Maduro aside to grab the microphone.

National television coverage of the event was suspended, causing momentary confusion until it returned minutes later after Maduro had regained his composure and the intruder had been removed from the stage.

"Incident overcome," said Maduro, shaking it off.

Watching the ceremony was a packed assembly with foreign leaders, lawmakers and other dignitaries in attendance.

Close allies Presidents Raul Castro of Cuba and Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran were in the audience, along with the presidents of Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia and neighboring Colombia.

Maduro had met the night before in Lima with regional leaders who extended their congratulations to the new government and urged all sides in the bitterly contested elections to accept "the official results."

The endorsement came



Supporters of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro show a portrait of late President Hugo Chavez when they gathered in front of the Congress before the inauguration ceremony yesterday. (AFP)

just hours after Venezuelan election authorities announced they would conduct an expanded audit of Sunday's election returns in response to opposition demands for a full recount.

Opposition candidate Henrique Capriles immediately accepted, congratulating his followers on their "struggle for the truth."

Violent post-election pro-



Venezuelan National Assembly president Diosdado Cabello (behind) and security personnel restrained a man who all of a sudden approached Maduro (R) during the inauguration. (AFP)

tests left eight people dead and dozens hurt, igniting a crisis as Maduro and Capriles traded fiery accusations over who was to blame.

For Maduro, the election was the culmination of a political career that took him from one-time bus driver and union organizer to Chavez's handpicked choice to succeed him as president.

But he also lost the votes of hundreds of thousands of Chavez supporters to Capriles, a 40-year-old state governor who lost to the comandante in October by an 11-point margin.

Maduro promises to uphold Chavez's legacy of ruling in favor of the poorest Venezuelans -- nearly 30 percent of the country's 29 million people -- and to maintain the popular social programs funded with the country's oil wealth.

But while backed fiercely by the PSUV and the deep pockets of Venezuela's state oil industry, the burly, mustachioed Maduro emerged weakened from the elections, which saw a significant slippage of support among Chavez loyalists.

International News

Central America to press US for help fighting crime

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Central American leaders will press the United States for more money to fight organized crime in their region, a conduit for nearly all US-bound cocaine, El Salvador's president said Friday.

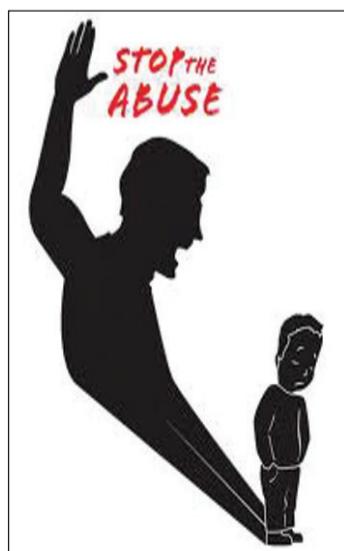
They will make this appeal at a meeting May 3 with President Barack Obama in Costa Rica, said President Mauricio Funes.

Central America has become one of the world's most violent regions because an estimated 90 percent of the cocaine shipped to the United States from South America now passes through it.

So far the United States has pledged to provide Central America with \$360 million in aid for regional security, of which it has disbursed \$40 million, Funes told reporters.

"Without greater involvement from the largest drug consuming market in the world, the fight against drug trafficking and organized crime in general will not be as efficient as we hope," Funes said, alluding to Washington.

Funes was to meet Friday with Secretary of State John Kerry and said he would ask for a face-to-face meeting with Obama in Costa Rica in May.



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2012

- Celerio starting from AWG. 20,500
- Suzuki Sx4 AWG. 35,000

bbo not included

SUZUKI ARUBA

French family kidnapped in Cameroon freed

YAOUNDE (AFP) - A French family of seven abducted by Islamic extremists while holidaying in Cameroon have been freed after two months in captivity, officials said Friday.

The hostages -- a father, mother, four children aged 5 to 12, and an uncle -- were all in good health, the French presidency said.

The Cameroonian president

said in a statement read on national radio that the hostages -- who were seized by six gunmen on February 19 and taken to neighbouring Nigeria -- had been "handed over last night to Cameroonian authorities".

He did not say how they were freed but he thanked the governments of Nigeria and France.

The French foreign minister said they were freed overnight on Thursday to Friday "in an area between Nigeria and Cameroon".

The family were seen arriving Friday at the French embassy in Yaounde, the Cameroonian capital.

French President Francois Hollande insisted after their release that France had not paid

any ransom.

They had been held by Islamist sect Boko Haram -- which is blamed for killing thousands of people in an insurgency in northern Nigeria since 2009.

The Boko Haram insurgency is estimated to have left more than 3,000 people dead since 2009, including many killings in operations by the security services.

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Health & Living

Founder of faulty breast implants firm takes stand

MARSEILLE (AFP) - The founder of a firm whose faulty breast implants sparked a global health scare told a French court on Friday that he had not put any lives at risk.

Jean-Claude Mas made his much-anticipated first statement on the third day of one of France's biggest trials, which sees Mas and four others face charges of aggravated fraud for using non-authorised silicone gel in implants.

An estimated 300,000 women in 65 countries are believed to have received the implants made by the firm PIP, which some health authorities say are twice as likely to rupture as other brands.

As some 100 plaintiffs looked on, Mas told the judge he had obtained the gel formula from a plastic surgeon with whom he had worked in the early 1980s -- his first contact with the breast implant sector.

News of the faulty implants in 2011 sparked fears worldwide, but health officials in various countries have said they are not toxic and do not increase the risk of breast cancer.

More than 5,000 women have registered as plaintiffs in the trial in the southern city of Marseille -- which sees the defendants face up to five years in prison -- alleging that the gel poses a health risk.

Marie-Therese Louvet, one of the plaintiffs present at the trial -- due to last until May 17 -- told AFP on Friday that she had had PIP implants fitted after breast cancer and had to have them hastily removed.

She said they were "seeping through" when the surgeon took them out.

Mas, a former life-insurance salesman who also dabbled in the wine industry and in diamonds, got his start in the medical business by selling pharmaceuticals and founded PIP in 1991 to take advantage

of the boom in cosmetic implants.

He built the company into the third-largest global supplier but came under the spotlight when plastic surgeons began reporting an unusual number of ruptures in his products.

Health authorities later discovered he was saving millions of euros by allegedly using industrial-grade gel in 75 percent of the implants. PIP's implants were banned and the company eventually liquidated.

PIP exported more than 80 percent of its implants, with about half going to Latin America, about a third to other countries in western Europe, some 10 percent to eastern Europe and the rest to the Middle East and Asia.

Questioned after him on Friday, Mas's former right-hand man Claude Couty admitted having allowed the sale of implants that had not been officially authorised, but said he



was "never aware of the danger".

PIP's quality control director Hannelore Font, who started working at the firm in 1999 aged 22, said she had blocked the sale of some batches of implants in 2009.

Some of the defendants, including Mas, are also the subject of separate and ongoing manslaughter and financial fraud investigations arising from the scandal.

The manslaughter probe is related to the 2010 death from cancer of a woman who was fitted with the implants.



JIRANIA : (AFP) In this photograph taken on April 12, 2013 eighteen year-old Indian daily labourer, Abdul Rahman holds his 18 month old daughter Roona Begum, suffering from Hydrocephalus which is a buildup of fluid inside the skull that leads to brain swelling, in front of their home in Jirania village on the outskirts of Agartala, the capital of northeastern state of Tripura. Indian doctors began draining yesterday excess fluid from the head of a baby suffering from a rare disorder that caused her skull to swell to nearly double its size, a neurosurgeon told AFP.

Experts probe human-to-human spread of China bird flu

BEIJING (AFP) - Experts from the UN's health agency are examining whether the H7N9 bird flu virus is spreading among humans, after a cluster of cases among relatives, but downplayed fears of a pandemic Friday.

"What we don't know is the size of the iceberg under this tip," said the World Health Organisation's representative in China after revealing details of three families who have shown possible human-to-human transmission.

Michael O'Leary was speaking as 15 global international health experts began a week-long mission in Beijing and Shanghai to investigate the H7N9 bird flu virus, which has killed 17 people and sickened 70 others.

As questions remain about the virus source and China faces global scrutiny on its handling of the disease, President Xi Jinping was also cited by state media as urging officials to do their utmost to "contain the spread" of H7N9.

O'Leary said Friday: "The primary focus of the investigation is to determine whether this is in fact spreading at a lower level among humans. But there is no evidence for that so far except in these very rare instances."

He said one family in Shanghai had shown evidence of more than one family member being infected with the deadly strain.

In the two other clusters, one family member was infected while the other was "clinically similar and presumed H7N9".

He said investigators were trying to determine whether the family members were infected with the virus from the same source, or from each other.

Since China announced nearly three weeks ago that it had found the strain in people for the first time, almost all of the cases have occurred in Shanghai and four nearby provinces while one appeared in Beijing.

O'Leary also said investigations into the source of the virus were continuing, though the virus is believed to be crossing to humans from birds, prompting mass poultry culls in several cities.

A link to wild birds remained open to question, with a Chinese Academy of Sciences zoologist saying 15 of 16 cases it tracked occurred along a migratory route, while the State Forestry Administration said 860 wildlife samples had so far tested negative for H7N9.



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Sci-Tech

Pakistan quake victims clamour for aid

MASHKAIL (AFP) - Pakistani earthquake victims staged protests Friday, demanding the government do more to provide emergency relief as they prepared to spend a fourth night sleeping out in the open.

Tuesday's 7.8-magnitude quake, centred in southeastern Iran, killed 41 people -- all but one of whom were in Pakistan, where thousands more have been affected.

One of the worst-hit areas is Mashkail, a remote community in Pakistan's southwestern province Baluchistan, where the lack of paved roads, phone coverage and medical facilities have hampered the rescue effort.

Local residents held two protests on Friday outside government offices in Mashkail, demanding shelter and the restoration of electricity after poles in some areas were destroyed by the earthquake.

Families whose homes have been damaged or destroyed are camping out under date trees without tents or plastic sheets, although food and water is available in shops that remain open, coming from across the border with Iran.

"If this earthquake had struck some other area, all the government machinery would have gone. Here only two government officials came but delivered nothing," Mohammad Khalil, a driver, told AFP.

Estimates of the number of

people affected have risen steadily.

On Friday, local Mashkail administration official Syed Mureed Shah put the figure at more than 35,000 out of nearly 40,000 people scattered throughout the wider district of Washuk.

Thousands of homes are believed to have been damaged.

Baluchistan, which also borders Afghanistan, is plagued by Islamist militancy, attacks on the Shiite Muslim minority and a separatist Baluch insurgency.

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The Texas fertilizer factory where an earthquake-like explosion killed up to 15 people was fined by US regulators in 2012 over its transport of hazardous materials, documents showed.

The blast at the West Fertilizer Company on Wednesday -- which destroyed dozens of homes in the small town of West -- came after a fire at the plant, which is believed to have held large amounts of potentially volatile ammonia.

In 2012 the company was fined \$10,100 by the US Pipelines and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration

(PHMSA) for mislabeled cargo tanks and "failing to develop and adhere to a security plan" for transporting a large quantity of anhydrous ammonia, according to a copy of the citation obtained by AFP.

The company reached a settlement with US regulators in which it paid a \$5,250 fine, the documents show.

In 2006, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality carried out an "odor complaint investigation" at the plant and issued a notice saying it was operating without authorization.

The Dallas Morning News

meanwhile reported that the company had told the US Environmental Protection Agency and local authorities that its factory posed no risk of fire or explosion despite holding up to 54,000 pounds of ammonia.

Anhydrous ammonia, NH3, is a pungent, flammable colorless gas commonly used as a soil fertilizer.

It is compressed into liquid form and stored in high-pressure tanks. It becomes potentially explosive when high concentrations are ignited by a heat source greater than 1,204 F (651 C).

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CALVIN and HOBBS

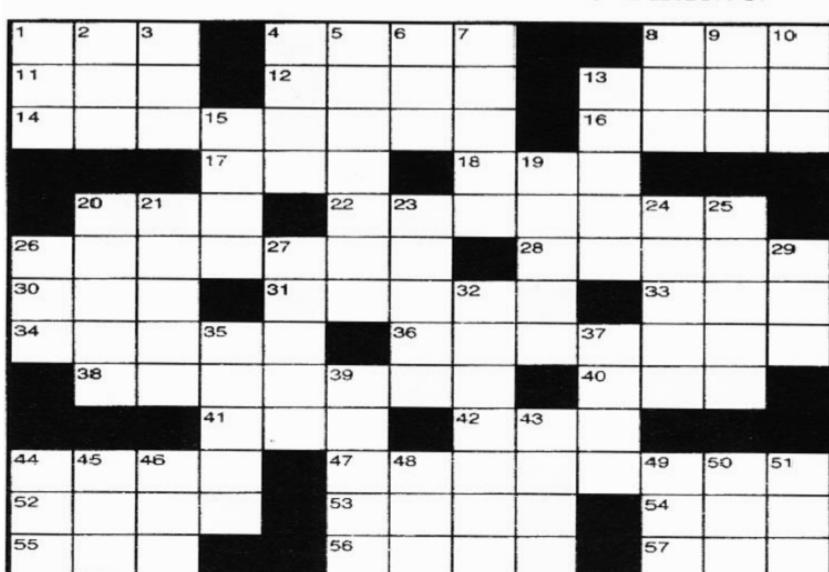


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ACROSS

1. Lackland, for one (abbr.)
4. Pull's opposite
8. Wacky fellow
11. Shad product
12. Give one's approval
13. Quote
14. Come to an end
16. Resting
17. IM provider
18. League for the Eagles (abbr.)
20. "___ and



Stimpy"

22. Military shoulder decoration

26. Woven fabric

28. Clinging wrap

30. Kitty doc

31. Low tides

33. Be sorry

34. Embellish

36. Actor Burr

38. Smoothly

40. Illustrations

41. ___ Lanka

42. Me (Fr.)

44. Vineyard's output

47. Least dirty

52. Tie together

53. Clark of "Superman"

54. '30s relief

agency (abbr.)

55. Watched

56. Perches

57. Cup handle

DOWN

"Cheers"

13. ___ spade a spade (2 wds.)

15. Word of resignation

19. Picky

20. Bamboolike grasses

21. Praise

23. Oyster gem

24. Baseball mistake

25. Tease

unceasingly

26. Dam-building agcy.

27. Not outer

29. Beatty or Buntline

32. Loan installment

35. Trip-meter button

37. Leading

39. Soccer maneuvers

43. Quaker grains

44. Yr. divisions

45. "Message ___

Bottle" (2 wds.)

46. Forthwith

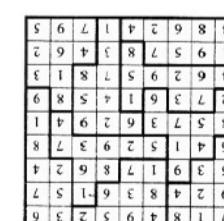
48. Island wreath

49. Opp. of WSW

50. Mrs., in Madrid

51. Driveway coating

SOLUTION



Complete the grid so that every row and every column contains the numbers 1 through 9. A number is Never repeated in a row or column. In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9.



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Finance

G20 pledge 'ambitious' steps to spur growth, jobs

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The Group of 20 economic powers pledged Friday "ambitious" steps to spur growth and job creation to get the crisis-scarred global economy back on track.

The financial leaders of the world's biggest economies, after talks in Washington, said the major crises had been overcome but growth was "too weak" and unemployment "too high."

The G20 "reaffirmed our determination to raise growth and create jobs," the group said in a statement following their meeting on the sidelines of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank spring meetings.

They said the global economy was held back by uncertain government policies, still-heavy private and public debt loads, impaired bank lending, and "incomplete rebalancing" of global demand -- a push on surplus G20 member economies like Germany and China to stimulate more local demand.

"We have agreed that while progress has been made, further actions are required to make growth strong, sustainable and balanced," said the group, which accounts for 90 percent global output.

Among the steps needed is the strengthening the euro-zone's economic and monetary, "including through an urgent movement towards banking union" and bolstering bank's balance sheets.

The United States should make more progress on a medium-term budget plan but "significant deficit reduction" in the world's largest economy already has been achieved, the G20 finance ministers and central bank governors said.

The finance chiefs gave a cautious endorsement of Japan's huge monetary stimulus program, agreeing it was necessary to boost the country's stagnating economy.

Japan's latest policy actions

"are intended to stop deflation and support domestic demand," they said.

A senior US Treasury official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said that Japanese officials had stressed how the monetary moves would lift demand in the world's third-largest economy, which has been struggling for two decades.

That came as many countries, including the United States, have expressed concern that Japan could be deliberately trying to force the yen lower to boost exports and cut imports via "competitive devaluation."

Siluanov, whose country Russia currently holds the G20 presidency, said there was strong debate on a framework agreement on deficit and debt targets.

But the G20 also urged the United States and Japan, both undertaking strong efforts to expand domestic demand, to quickly fashion "credible" medium-term plans for reeling in their huge debt and deficit loads.

The group called for the global adoption of standards for sharing bank account information in an effort to fight tax evasion and curtail banking secrecy.

The G20 said they "strongly encourage" all countries to sign on to a commitment to the automatic exchange of banking information "which is expected to be the standard," in the group's strongest endorsement yet of a move that takes aim especially at tax havens like Switzerland.



NEW YORK (AFP) - The Federal Aviation Administration Friday approved Boeing's design for modifications to the 787 battery system, a key hurdle in returning the planes to service after they were grounded globally. Airlines operating the 787 will be required to install containment and venting systems and to replace batteries with modified components. The FAA said it will only allow 787s to return to service after inspectors accept the work.

US stocks gain in light trading day

NEW YORK (AFP) - US stocks closed higher Friday after a series of mixed earnings reports arrived into a market preoccupied with the Boston manhunt.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 10.37 (0.07 percent) to 14,547.51. The index rallied after spending much of the day in the red.

The broad-based S&P 500 jumped 13.64 (0.88 percent) to 1,555.25, while the tech-rich Nasdaq Composite Index added 39.69 (1.25 percent) to 3,206.06.

The gains followed earnings reports from Google and Microsoft that exceeded expectations, while IBM and

McDonald were laggards.

But volumes were down with the nation fixated on the hunt for a suspect in the Boston marathon bombings that took three people's lives on Monday.

Microsoft jumped 3.5 percent after reporting better-than-expected profits despite flat quarter-on-quarter revenues in its Windows division.

Google rose 4.4 percent. The world's leading Internet search company made up for cheaper ad prices with a 20 percent increase in the number of paid clicks on ads.

Boeing rose 2.2 percent. General Electric fell 4.1 percent after revenues edged



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Fitch strips Britain of top rating

LONDON (AFP) - Fitch on Friday stripped recession-threatened Britain of its top triple-A rating, moving it down one notch to 'AA+' as a weaker economic outlook continues to push up the country's debt.

In response, the coalition government indicated that the downgrade would not sway it from finance minister George Osborne's controversial policy of deep cuts to state spending.

Fitch meanwhile said in a statement published after the close of British markets: "The downgrade of the UK's sovereign ratings primarily reflects a weaker economic and fiscal outlook and hence the upward revision to Fitch's medium-term projections for UK budget deficits and government debt." It gave Britain a 'stable' outlook.

"Despite the loss of its 'AAA' status, the UK's extremely strong credit profile is reflected in its 'AA+' rating and the Stable Outlook," Fitch added.

The downgrade comes al-

most two months after rival agency Moody's also stripped Britain of a triple-A debt rating, saying government debt was still mounting and that growth was too weak to reverse the trend before 2016. Downgrades can cause a country to pay higher interest for its debt.

Friday's development meanwhile comes ahead of official economic data out next week that will show whether Britain fell into recession during the first quarter of 2013.

Ahead of Thursday's GDP data, the government indicated that it would stick by its austerity programme.

HSBC bank economist Simon Wells said the latest downgrade "serves as a reminder of the tricky situation that Chancellor George Osborne finds himself in."

Fitch said it was revising down its forecast economic growth for Britain in 2013 and 2014 to 0.8 percent and 1.8 percent respectively, from 1.5 percent and 2.0 percent six months ago.

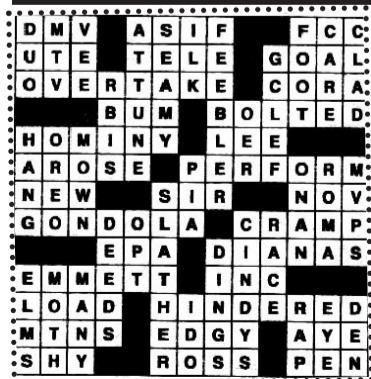
"The UK economy is not expected to reach its 2007 level of real GDP until 2014, underscoring the weakness of the economic recovery," it said.

Fitch added: "Higher than previously projected budget deficits and debt primarily reflects the weak growth performance of the UK economy in recent years, partly due to headwinds of private and public sector deleveraging and the eurozone crisis."

Britain's economy has been hit hard by the eurozone debt crisis. Though not a member of the eurozone, the country counts the single currency bloc as its main trading partner.

Meanwhile ongoing state austerity measures from the coalition government that took power in 2010 have also hindered Britain's growth.

YESTERDAY'S Crossword Answer



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Kim Kardashian Settles Divorce



- After weeks of speculation and a planned trial scheduled in a few weeks, Kim Kardashian and her ex Kris Humphries have agreed on terms to settle their divorce. "I think this is a reasonable way to resolve this case," said Superior Court Judge Hank Goldberg, who did not disclose terms of the settlement. Humphries (which was not present) had requested that the marriage be annulled and accused Kardashian of "defrauding" him into marrying her. The reality star denied the fraud claim and was seeking to have the marriage dissolved as a traditional divorce.

Tears, prayers and candles for those lost in Texas blast



-- Eric Garcia, 12, cries during a candlelight vigil and prayer honoring the victims of West Fertilizer Company explosion at St. Mary's Assumption Catholic Church in West. With prayers, tears, and candles, residents of this tiny Texas town mourned those killed by an explosion at a fertilizer plant as crews searched the smoking rubble Thursday for survivors. In a town as small as West -- population 2,800 -- there are no strangers. Everyone was touched somehow by the massive blast that destroyed dozens of homes, flattened a 50-unit apartment building and tore a nursing home apart. Estimates ranged from five to 35 dead on Thursday. Carol Bajer lost her home to the blast, but like Pilgrim, feels blessed that she didn't lose her family. Or her life.

Miss Aruba Larisa Leeuwe donates clothing and articles to local foundations



-- After receiving donations from many local businesses for Miss Aruba's Flea-market fundraising "Aruba against Domestic Violence", Larisa decided to make good use of the donations, and all the remaining clothing and articles were packed into 15 boxes and donated to 2 Foundations on Aruba. Larisa visited the Fundacion pa nos Comunidad (Foundation for our Community) an organization that fights poverty and helps fam-



ilies in need, and also Casa Cuna Progreso, a shelter for children between 0 and 8 years who can't live at home due to a difficult or unsafe situation. Larisa would like to thank all local businesses who have helped her to make these donations possible: Super Lucky store, Big Bazaar, Best Deal, La Linda, Dots, Fashion Zone, KeKe, Angelo, Argee Fashion. It's wonderful to see so many people working together to help families and children in need in Aruba. Also a special word of appreciation goes out to Fundacion pa nos Comunidad and Fundacion Casa Cuna Progreso for their dedication and hard work all year long.

DRIVE Safely

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Aruba's most successful developers of secure, superior communities for both the permanent and part time resident market, will soon break ground on what they consider their most exclusive project to date. Known for 16 years of unmatched quality and service, the Cas Bon people are proud to unveil their new pet

project: O Condominiums. This is the same company which developed the innovative Gold Coast Villas community in Malmok.

Renowned for reliable construction, developers of O Condominiums consider the boutique community will be the "jewel in the crown" of the nine projects they have successfully completed and

maintain. It is only three stories and twenty luxurious units, of which 14 will be oceanfront, the remainder, ocean view. Sizes range from one bedroom condominiums with a bath and a half to three-bedrooms, each bedroom with its own bath, and an additional guest half/bath. The designs include a family entertainment room that will

be specially fitted with electronic and Internet connections and outlets enabling a state-of-the-art home theater. An important aspect of this singular facility is owners have various options to customize kitchens and fixtures to their particular tastes and standards.

Each apartment sports an extremely spacious 35 square meter covered terrace overlooking the sea. Windows will be double-paned and doors have weather stripping to insure less cost on air-conditioning, which is integrated into construction. Homeowners will have input into the finishing they prefer in the kitchen and other rooms, to customize your condominium to your taste. Public amenities will include an elegant pool deck,

concierge services, lounge area, BBQ station, fitness room, assigned parking, additional outside storage for bicycles and personal items, and 24-hour security. A quiet, secluded section of Eagle beach is only a few steps from the front door.

O Condominiums officially opened the doors of their sales office onsite at Eagle Beach on December 24. Interested parties can inspect the project in a spacious plot right next to the gourmet Screaming Eagle restaurant. The project is directed towards discerning clients seeking a top quality property on Aruba in an ideal, tranquil, beachfront location. Prospective property owners will find the Cas Bon people enjoy an exceptional reputation on Aruba for excellence and reliability.

Contact the sales office at 297-732-0000/ 297-287-5300 or visit their website: <http://www.o-eaglebeach.aruba.com>

Eat like a local at The Queen's restaurant at Palm Beach Plaza



Keshi Yena with plaintains, vegetables and pica

-- An elegant décor with a breezy terrace overlooking Palm Beach welcomes guests to Varella Innocencia's very popular restaurant showcasing authentic local cuisine:

The Queen's

They may have moved from Oranjestad to hipper new digs in Palm Beach Plaza, but the food and prices are strictly native, which is what first won this charming

eatery their loyal clientele. Varella's mom, Luisa, is still in the kitchen, conjuring up the delicious dishes that have been in her family for generations, acknowledged on the menu with items such as "Carni Stoba di Mamachi" - "Grandma's Beef Stew," and their Arawak Steak, along with local delicacies like Keshi Yena - "Full Cheese." This is a tasty, filling stew of

chicken, with other ingredients that are handy that day, all incased in a thick skin of melted Gouda. It was very satisfying and particularly memorable paired with The Queen's garlic bread and very special Pica, a mix of chopped onions and the famous local hot pepper, Madame Janette. Not overly spicy, it lends that perfect bit of tang to this deliciously picturesque meal.

One of the distinctions of Aruban cuisine is incorporating unique indigenous ingredients such as in Wild Cucumber Stew and a particular light fish chowder accompanied by the local specialties pan bati (corn meal pancake) and funchi (the local version of polenta.)

Seafood main courses of Catch of the Day Aruban Style to shrimp and a mixed seafood platter with shrimp, fish, squid, scallops and mussels. Meat dishes such as BBQ Chicken and Ribs or



Varella, Luisa and the next generation of chef

Grilled Tenderloin, each including a choice of 2 side dishes; all quite yummy and bargain-priced to boot!

The Queen's is located on the second level of Palm Beach Plaza, tucked into a cozy corner at the front of the mall. If you have a mind to try the real deal in Aruban food, without a doubt, this is the way to truly eat like a local. **They are open from**

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from an extensive menu they also have daily specials made from whatever is in season and Mama Luisa is in the mood to prepare, so don't forget to ask about what isn't on the menu!

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Tennis: Nadal dodges Dimitrov scare, Djokovic cruises



MONTE CARLO (AFP) - Rafael Nadal survived one of his toughest claycourt tests to squeeze out a dramatic 6-2, 2-6, 6-4 win over highly-rated Bulgarian Grigor Dimitrov in the quarter-finals of the Monte Carlo Masters on Friday.

The Spaniard, who has not lost in the principality since 2003, was reluctant to talk about taping on his back, evidence of the wear and tear his return to his beloved clay may be taking after he missed seven months of play with knee problems.

"I'm happy to be in the semi-finals, I played the best with what I had. It's normal to have problems on the back, on the shoulder, on the elbow," was the extent of the eight-time

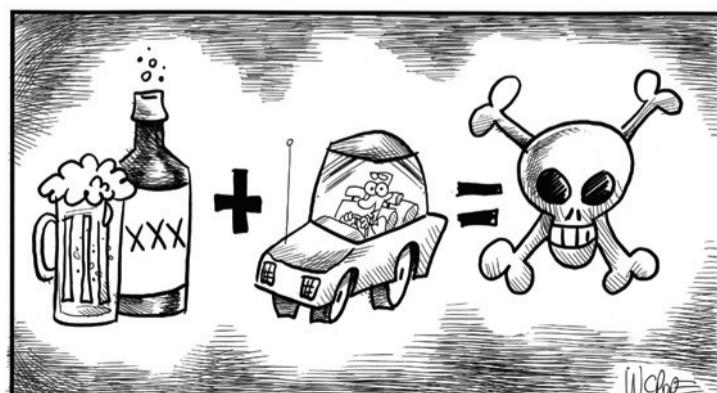
champions' comments.

Top seed Novak Djokovic fought through his own physical problems as he won his third match of the week on his injured, but healing, right ankle with the Serb beating Jarkko Nieminen 6-4, 6-3 to advance into the final four.

"My ankle is getting better and better," said the Serb.

Djokovic broke late in the first set and started the second with a break as he got past the Finn who had seen off Juan Martin del Potro a day earlier.

Nadal, bidding for an unprecedented ninth straight trophy in Monte Carlo, was given a huge fright by Dimitrov, who fell victim to leg cramp in the closing moments of a thriller lasting just over two hours.



One of the closest calls of Nadal's clay career ended with his 45th straight Monte Carlo win. Nadal lost a set in the event for only the third time since 2009.

"I didn't play tennis for seven months. I'm losing little bit of intensity," said the Spaniard.

Dimitrov, feeling his left thigh, managed to save a Nadal match point with a rifling winner down the line which left him doubled over in pain.

A few moments later, Nadal fired over his second ace of a dramatic afternoon to take the win.

Nadal, whose only loss in Monte Carlo came back in 2003, produced some 36 unforced errors while the 34th-ranked Dimitrov struck 28 winners.

"It's a tough loss, I think I gave everything I had today," said Dimitrov.

"Today he obviously showed why he's the best not only on that surface, I believe, but he's one of the best out there."

French sixth seed Jo-Wilfried Tsonga will line up as Nadal's semi-final opponent after defeating Swiss Stanislas Wawrinka 2-6, 6-3, 6-4.

Wawrinka had knocked out second seed Andy Murray 24 hours earlier.

"It's an incredible challenge, he's won eight times here. Anything I might achieve will be just a bonus for me," said Tsonga of his date with the Spaniard.

In the other half of the draw, Italy's Fabio Fognini upset French seventh seed Richard Gasquet 7-6 (7/0), 6-2 to next play Djokovic.

SPORTS

Boxing: I'm not skirting Krasniqi issue, says Cleverly



Nathan Cleverly (l) says he is ready for war against Robin Krasniqi (r)

LONDON (AFP) - Britain's Nathan Cleverly insists he has not overlooked today's challenger Robin Krasniqi, as he aims to stay on course for a world title unification fight with Bernard Hopkins later this year.

The Welshman makes a fifth defence of his World Boxing Organisation (WBO) light-heavyweight title against Krasniqi at Wembley Arena.

Hopkins and Cleverly, who have both expressed interest in facing each other in 2013, have mandatory challengers to deal with before any talks can begin about a unification clash.

Hopkins, at 48 boxing's oldest ever world champion, is the International Boxing Federation (IBF) title-holder and defends his belt against Krasniqi's fellow German Karo Murat on July 27.

Cleverly, meanwhile, must come through against a confident Krasniqi, who he expects to give him one of the toughest fights of his unbeaten 25-bout career.

"I can't afford to slip up, especially as we are edging to-

wards the big fights now," said Cleverly.

"I am not looking too far ahead. I am thinking only about this guy, but when I am prepared mentally and physically, there is no way to stop me. When I win I will be moving on to bigger and better things. Only then can I start thinking about Hopkins."

Krasniqi, 26, was in a mischievous mood at the pre-fight press conference and presented the champion with a skirt bearing the inscription 'Princess'.

Krasniqi, who is on a 38-fight winning streak, then tried to wind up Cleverly by claiming he lacked the stomach for a fight after crying off sick earlier this year.

Mathematics university graduate Cleverly, 26, laughed off Krasniqi's taunts, but is taking him seriously in the ring so his dream of fighting Hopkins is not wrecked.

"It's all bravado and it's good fun," he told AFP. "I just smiled it off and I didn't fall into his trap of trying to wind me up."



LONDON (AFP) Rageh Omaar and his ITV News team have been asked to leave Bahrain, where tensions are high ahead of the weekend's F1 race. ITV has been forced to leave Bahrain because they reported on violent demonstrations ahead of the Formula One Grand Prix in the tiny Gulf kingdom, the broadcaster said. World motorsport's governing body, the FIA, and promoters Formula One Management have said the race should go ahead on Sunday despite the demonstrations.

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Boxing: Trout seeks another upset against Alvarez

LOS ANGELES (AFP) - Austin Trout, who surprised Miguel Cotto for the World Boxing Association light middleweight world title, will look for another upset today in San Antonio when he takes on World Boxing Council champ Saul "Canelo" Alvarez.

Trout's punishing unanimous decision over Puerto Rico's Cotto at New York's Madison Square Garden saw the 27-year-old US southpaw improve to 26-0 with 14 knockouts and cemented his status as a rising ring star.

His title and that of Mexico's Alvarez will both be on the line on Saturday at San Antonio's Alamodome, and Trout



expects a tough fight from the 22-year-old Alvarez -- a grinding puncher like Cotto who also has youth on his side.

Alvarez improved to 41-0-1 with a fifth-round technical knockout of Josesito Lopez last September. He knocked Lopez down three times en route to the victory.

"Canelo is in his prime, he's undefeated and he's not battle worn," Trout said. "He's still got a lot of pop and life left in him."

"We just want to up the intensity from the Miguel Cotto fight," Trout added. "Even

though they're not the same fighter, they have similar styles. "We want to up the intensity because Canelo is a bit more intense of a fighter than Miguel Cotto."

Alvarez, for his part, confidently predicted a victory -- although he didn't expect it to be easy. "If I want to win this fight, I have to move fast," he said. "I have to watch out for Trout's left."

"I've been studying his style and I can definitely adapt to it. It's going to be tough, but I know I can beat him."

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Ingrid Does
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Rosalinda Maduro
Chandette Richardson
Editors

Marline v.d. Linden
Asst. to the editors

Rosalie Klein
Reporter/Photographer

Yanis Garcia
Elly Erasmus
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Tel: 588-9517 / Fax: 588-9518
E-mail:
themorningnewsaruba@gmail.com
Website:
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MLB Standings					
American League					
	East	W	L	Pct	GB
BOSTON	11	04	.733	--	
YANKEES	08	06	.571	2.5	
BALTIMORE	08	07	.533	3.0	
TORONTO	07	09	.438	4.5	
TAMPA	05	10	.333	6.0	
Central					
DETROIT	09	06	.600	--	
KANSAS	08	06	.571	0.5	
MINNESOTA	06	07	.462	2.0	
CHICAGO	07	09	.438	2.5	
CLEVELAND	05	09	.357	3.5	
West					
OAKLAND	12	04	.750	--	
TEXAS	09	06	.600	2.5	
SEATTLE	07	10	.412	5.5	
LA ANGELES	04	10	.286	7.0	
HOUSTON	04	11	.267	7.5	
National League					
	East	W	L	Pct	GB
ATLANTA	13	02	.857	--	
WASHINGTON	09	06	.600	4.0	
NY METS	07	07	.500	5.5	
PHILADELPHIA	06	10	.375	7.5	
MIAMI	03	13	.188	10.5	
	Central	W	L	Pct	GB
ST. LOUIS	09	06	.600	--	
CINCINNATI	09	07	.562	0.5	
PITTSBURGH	07	08	.467	2.0	
MILWAUKEE	06	08	.429	2.5	
CHICAGO	05	09	.357	3.5	
	West	W	L	Pct	GB
COLORADO	11	04	.733	--	
ARIZONA	09	06	.600	2.0	
SAN FRANCISCO	09	07	.562	2.5	
DODGERS	07	08	.467	4.0	
SAN DIEGO	05	10	.333	6.0	

x-Clinched Playoff Spot; y-Division Champ

Annual Bugaloe Volleyball Tournament May 12 2013!



PALM BEACH- Start practicing that volleyball and make sure you're ready for the popular Bugaloe Volleyball Tournament May 12! Organized by Bugaloe Beach Bar & Grill in collaboration with CoolFM, locals are invited to participate in a day of fun. Team up in 6 (FUN) or 4 (ADVANCED) players, and ensure those trophies are yours! The relaxing beach tunes will be provided by our friends at Cool-FM and you can cool off in between matches with a cold beer! At the end of the day the Equator Band will take care of those bruised hips and aching muscles and makes you swing your way onto the dance floor!

Starting at 10 a.m. the tournament takes place at Palm Beach right in front of Bugaloe Beach Bar. Not only you can win some awesome prizes, but the event will combine a great day of fun with raising funds for Fundacion Pa Nos Comunidad. This non-profit organization helps families in Aruba, living in poverty, meet their basic needs. The Food Bank, F.P.N.C. biggest project, provides food, clothing and furniture for these families.

Make sure you sign up for a fun day with your friends, siblings, colleagues - www.arubabeachvolleyball.com and mark the date in your calendar today!

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NBA: Heat aim to crown stellar season with another title



Kawhi Leonard #2 of the San Antonio Spurs glides to the rim against the Minnesota Timberwolves

LOS ANGELES (AFP) - The Miami Heat, with superstar LeBron James at the peak of his game, head into the NBA playoffs seeking to cap a stellar regular season with a second straight championship.

The Heat's follow-up to last season's title has so far been a campaign that included a monstrous 66 wins and a mammoth 27-game winning streak -- the second-longest in league history.

"It's great. It's a testament to the team being committed and being very consistent all year," said Dwyane Wade of the Heat's continuing dominance.

"The guys in the locker room should be very proud," Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said.

The Eastern Conference top seeds will begin their playoff push by hosting the Milwaukee Bucks in game one of their best-of-seven first-round series on Sunday.

The playoffs tip off on today with four first-round games -- two in the East and two in the West. Four more games are scheduled for Sunday.

Awaiting the Heat will be Brandon Jennings and the Bucks, who come in as the eighth seed after struggling late in the regular season. Milwaukee have won just four of their past 16 games and have the worst record of all the playoff teams at 38-44.

Many pundits are already predicting a championship series repeat of last year's finals, between the Heat and Western Conference top seeds Oklahoma City.

The Thunder captured their third straight division crown and will meet a familiar face in James Harden and the Houston Rockets, beginning Sunday.

The Thunder traded Harden to Houston after falling to Miami in five games in last year's finals.

"We're good. I think the confidence is high," said Thunder guard Thabo Sefolosha, of Switzerland. "We've been playing well lately. We've been there before but every post-season is different, so we're just going to have to be real focused."

The fourth-seeded Brooklyn

Nets are back in the playoffs and will host the Chicago Bulls starting today.

Chicago was the East's top seed the last two seasons, but have played the entire year without former Most Valuable Player Derrick Rose, who tore a knee ligament in the Bulls' playoff opener last year.

Even without him, the Bulls won 45 games this season and took three of four from the Nets.

"We know Brooklyn is a hell of a team," said French center Joakim Noah. "They have a lot of offensive firepower with (Deron Williams) and Brook Lopez. They're tough. They re-

when the division rivals face off Saturday.

The veteran-laden Celtics haven't had All-Star point guard Rajon Rondo since mid-season and lost the season series to New York three games to one.

A resurgent Tim Duncan, 36, led the San Antonio Spurs to a number two seed in the West after the Spurs were eliminated by the Thunder in last year's conference finals.

San Antonio squares off this weekend against the under-achieving Los Angeles Lakers, who began with high expectations but ended up squeaking into the playoffs on the last



LeBron James at the peak of his game, is also the favorite player to win the MVP

bound. It's going to be a tough series. But we're excited."

The New York Knicks head into these playoffs with much higher expectations, as Carmelo Anthony guided the Knicks to a No. 2 seed and their first Atlantic Division crown in 19 years. The Knicks were a first round victim of Miami last year.

New York seeks to avenge a 2011 four-game series sweep at the hands of the Boston Celtics

night of the regular season.

And the Lakers won't have superstar Kobe Bryant to help them. He had surgery for a torn Achilles tendon last week and can only hope to be back for the start of next season.

Bryant's was just one of many injuries the Lakers battled all season, but they won eight of their last nine games -- beating Houston in their season finale to grab the West's seventh seed from the Rockets.

NBA: New Orleans drop Hornets and become Pelicans



NEW ORLEANS (AFP) - The New Orleans' National Basketball Association team officially adopted their new moniker Thursday, becoming known as the Pelicans.

"We have been looking forward to this day since we announced the Pelicans as the new name," said owner Tom Benson.

"The Pelican is a symbol for our city and region and we're excited to start a new era in Louisiana basketball history. This offseason is going to be a special time for the Pelicans."

The name change from the Hornets to the Pelicans was originally announced three months ago but didn't become official until the end of the 2012-13 season in which they missed the playoffs.

The franchise will operate as the Pelicans at next month's NBA draft lottery.